

SARL NEWS SUNDAY 15 MARCH 2009

You are listening to ZS6SRL, the official Radio Station of the South African Radio League, the National Body for Amateur Radio in South Africa, with a news bulletin every Sunday at 08:15 CAT in Afrikaans and at 08:30 CAT in English. To listen to a webstream, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on ARMI and follow the links for details. PLEASE NOTE: for audio via Echolink, connect to ZS0JPL-R.

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Your news reader this morning is (name), (call sign), on 145,725 and 7,066 MHz from Pretoria, with relays on 28,325, 14,235, 10,130, 7,066 and 3,695 MHz SSB, as well as 52,750, 438,825 and 1 296 MHz FM in the Pretoria area. (Other newsreaders please change to suit).

SILENT KEY

With sadness we announce two Silent Keys this past week.

Mike, ZS6AFG, passed away last weekend after a long illness. Our condolences go out to his wife, Rae, and their children, John, Mikki, Michelle and Lorrain, and eight grandchildren.

Chris A J Els, ZS2CJ, formerly also ZS6CCM, of Graaff-Reinet became a Silent Key on 12 March. He was 75 years old. Due to ill health he was not active for many years.

(PAUSE)

In the news today: NATIONAL CONVENTION UPDATE

SARL COUNCIL TO MEET ON 27 AND 28 MARCH

WIN AN ICOM IC7200 IN THE 2009 CONSTRUCTION COMPETITION

TRY YOUR HAND AT PSK31 THIS WEEKEND

You are listening to ZS6SRL. Stay tuned for more detail on these and other important and interesting news items.

NATIONAL CONVENTION UPDATE

The Annual General Meeting documentation, which includes the minutes from last year, the financial statements, the agenda, budgets and a proxy form, is now available on the SARL members' only web pages for download. Go to www.sarl.org.za and at the top right-hand of the home page you will find the members only button. Click on it and enter your pin. The number appears on your membership certificate which you received when you paid your annual subscription. For assistance or to have the PDF document mailed to your email address please call Mariska at 011 675 2393 or send Mariska an email request to admin@sarl.org.za

The AGM will be held at the Oakdale club in Bellville on Saturday 25 April 2009. If you cannot attend the AGM part of the National Convention, please nominate another member as your proxy. Attendance at the AGM is important as you, as a member, will have the opportunity to influence the direction in which the SARL is taking Amateur Radio in South Africa.

This year there are some fabulous prizes to be won at the annual dinner. At every National Convention event you attend, you will get a competition ticket for the Saturday night draw, enhancing the chances of winning.

The full National Convention programme is on the SARL web together with a registration form. Complete all the details, do an electronic transfer or pay the amount into the SARL account. The closing date for National Convention registration is 10 April 2009. When making payment transfers, please use your call sign as reference.

If you are only attending the AGM and none of the other events, simply complete the registration form and mail it to the SARL. No fee is required for attending the annual general meeting. However, members are requested to indicate their attendance at the AGM, to facilitate the catering arrangements for refreshment before and during the meeting.

SARL COUNCIL TO MEET ON 27 AND 28 MARCH

The SARL council will meet on the 27 and 28 March for its annual strategic indaba. At this meeting the council will review the current status of amateur radio and finalise plans for the coming year. In his annual report at the AGM, the President will report on the meeting.

Members are invited to submit concerns and ideas which they would like the Council to consider. Send your input to the Secretary at secretary@sarl.org.za by not later than 20 March 2009.

WIN AN ICOM IC7200 IN THE 2009 CONSTRUCTION COMPETITION

The South African Amateur Radio Development Trust has announced the details of the 2009 construction competition. Entries are now invited. The main prize is an ICOM IC-7200 HF Transceiver with 50MHz included. The IC-7200 is the latest from ICOM offering IF DSP and many other features to provide superb communication. The prize is sponsored by Multisource Communications, the ICOM dealer in South Africa.

The competition is aimed at stimulating home construction. It is run in two rounds. In Round One, constructors are invited to submit a construction proposal for any project that will have application in amateur radio and that can be home-constructed for under R750. Entry forms are available on www.amateurradio.org.za. The closing date for Round One is 15 April 2009.

Three entries will be selected to go forward into Round 2. Each qualifying entrant will receive R1000 to construct a working prototype. The closing date

for Round 2 will be on 15 June, when the completed prototype must be in the hands of the judges.

The winner will be announced at the annual SA Amateur Radio Development Trust Awards function to be held in July. The runner ups will each receive the 2009 ARRL handbook.

TRY YOUR HAND AT PSK31 THIS WEEKEND

The Spanish Amateur Radio Society, URE, is sponsoring a PSK contest this weekend. It started yesterday at 16:00 UTC and will run until 16:00 UTC today. The contest call is "CQ EA TEST".

CONTEST NEWS

The first leg of the SARL VHF/UHF Contest will take place over the weekend of 20 to 22 March 2009. Two contests are running that weekend, viz. an analogue and a digital contest.

The first session of the SARL VHF/UHF Digital Contest starts at 16:00 UTC on Friday 20 March and ends at 12:59 UTC on Saturday; the second session starts at 13:00 UTC and ends at 12:00 UTC on Sunday 22 March 2009. Participation can be as a home station, a field station or a rover station and all authorised digital modes are permitted. The exchange is the call sign and a grid sub-square (6 digits).

The SARL VHF/UHF Analogue contest will start at 10:00 UTC on Saturday 21 March and end at 10:00 UTC on Sunday 22 March 2009. Participation can be as a single operator or multi-operator station and only FM and SSB may be used. The exchange is an RS report, call sign and a six-digit grid locator.

The first leg of the SARL 80 Metre QSO Party will take place on Thursday 2 April 2009 from 17:00 to 20:00 UTC.

The complete rules for the three contests can be found in the 2009 SARL Contest Manual available from the HF Happenings page on www.sarl.org.za. Make sure it is version 4 dated March 2009

PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the expected solar activity will be very low. The geomagnetic field is expected to be predominantly at quiet levels. The expected Effective Sunspot number for the coming week will be less than 5. The sun's failure to produce sunspots is playing havoc with some frequency prediction programs that use stored sunspot values and, of course, with our HF communications as well.

The imminent change of season with less energy from the sun reaching the Southern ionosphere is having an impact on propagation as well. 15 and 20 m will provide the best opportunities for DX. There is a possibility of 15 m openings towards India from about 13:00 CAT followed by 20 m at 16:00. Contacts with New Zealand are going to be very challenging. 20 m contacts may be possible

with Australia at 07:00. Contacts with Peru are unlikely. Brazil may be worked on 15 m from 14:00 till 16:00. At 15:00 there may be 15 m openings followed by short 20 m openings at 18:00 towards Europe. Short, weak contacts with the USA East Coast are possible on 15 m at 20:00.

10 MHz is looking promising late afternoon and after dark for the CW and digital enthusiasts.

Local conditions are going to be good on 40 m during daytime. 80 m may perform well during the early mornings and late afternoons over the shorter distances, e.g. between ZS5 and ZS6. 30 m may perform well during the middle of the day between ZS6 and ZS1. With winter on its way 20 m is preparing for hibernation.

80 m is the frequency of choice in the evenings. The thunderstorms and static may still be a bit challenging.

Remember that this is only a prediction and that HF has the capability to pleasantly surprise you, but you will never know unless you switch your rig on, listen and also call CQ.

Please visit www.spaceweather.co.za for further information.

DIARY OF EVENTS

14 and 15 March RSGB Commonwealth Contest; 20 March Closing date for submission of PIC debugger claims; 21 and 22 March SARL VHF/UHF Contests; 2 April First leg of the SARL 80 Metre QSO Party; 18 April World Amateur Radio Day, and 24-26 April SARL National Convention, Cape Town.

SARL News invites clubs and individuals to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners. Submit news items if possible in both English and Afrikaans to www.sarl.org.za/newsinbox.asp, not later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

The SARL also invites you to listen to the Amateur Radio Mirror International programme every Sunday morning at 10:00 CAT on 145,750 MHz in the Pretoria area, with relays on 7 082, 7 205 and 17 860 kHz. There is also a podcast by ZS6RO. For the webstream and Echolink by ZS6FCS, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'ARMI' and follow the links. A repeat transmission can be heard Mondays at 21:00 CAT on 3 215 kHz. Sentech sponsors the ARMI transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a bulletin of the South African Radio League, compiled by Roger, ZR3RC, and edited by Hester van der Walt. Thank you for listening, 73.

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